

of Mexico's still-young and -incomplete democracy by showing how events in the rural parts of the country invigorated both the left and the right. The author provides a wealth of data to support her conclusions, derived in part from extensive field work and the equally extensive use of primary documents. Moreover, she utilizes a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to analyze these data in sophisticated ways. Less positively, the first two chapters and the concluding chapter, in particular, read more like a dissertation than a book. The first two chapters are essentially a dissertation-like literature review. Throughout these two chapters, and in the last chapter, the author repeatedly asserts the importance and contributions of her research to the literature, giving the work a decidedly hortatory tone. This proclivity resurfaces frequently throughout the rest of the book, as well. This tendency to frequently reiterate the importance of the work and its originality undermines an otherwise strong piece of scholarship. It is best to let others judge the value of one's scholarship rather than repeatedly insisting on its significance. Nonetheless, this is a very interesting, comprehensive, and original addition to the literature on Mexican democratization.

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The Transformation of the Workers' Party in Brazil, 1989–2009 by Wendy Hunter. *New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 252 pp. \$29.99.*

The victory of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and the Workers' Party (PT) in Brazil's 2002 presidential election was both a watershed in Brazilian history and an important puzzle for political science. The prospect of electing Lula and his disciplined socialist party roiled financial markets and provoked a near crisis in the months leading up to the election. But instead of socialism, Lula delivered a moderate government that melded pragmatic market reform with progressive social policy. Indeed, the PT has become *the* model of successful leftist government in the region. But, in government, the PT has also transformed in important and distinctive ways, including installing one of the largest corruption schemes in the history of Brazil.

How and why did the PT transform and what accounts for the distinctive patterns of change? Wendy Hunter addresses this issue, drawing on three theoretical sources of explanation. A Downsian, rational-choice–informed analysis explains Lula and a core group of supporters as they engaged in classic vote-maximizing behavior. From 1989 on, this centrist group evaluated the Party's experiences governing at the local level and analyzed the reasons for repeatedly losing presidential elections. As a result, they shifted their message and their policies more and more toward the center, abandoning principled socialist positions and courting votes well beyond their core constituency, especially among the poor and uneducated who comprise Brazil's vast, informal sector

and whose concerns often conflict with those of organized labor (for example, on issues of inflation and wage indexation).

But Lula was not able to simply remake the Party. The PT is unusual in Brazil (and uncommon in Latin America) for its deep roots in society, a strong organizational base, and well-institutionalized rules and procedures. Hunter effectively combines a Downsian, rational-choice perspective with a systematic historical-institutional analysis to illuminate the ways in which the past constrains straightforward vote-maximizing behavior. Hunter shows that Lula and his moderate supporters engaged in a process of “layering” new institutions and rules over the existing ones to create maneuvering room for the leadership. This layering did not fundamentally alter the party, but it did grant Lula sufficient autonomy to present himself, and by extension the party, to voters in ways that deviated from socialist principles. The preservation of the underlying party structure, even as Lula distanced himself, offered both distinctive advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the disciplined Party base endowed the party with credibility, helped Lula pass difficult reforms, and helped him weather various crises. On the other hand, the resistance of the Party base to normal Brazilian politics prevented Lula from relying on “coalitional presidentialism” and instead led him to resort to a massive legislative vote-buying scheme—the *mensalão* scandal.

Hunter concludes this masterful account of the rise and transformation of the PT by comparing it to other important leftist parties in the region. The PT in comparative perspective leads Hunter to conclude that the key to successful adaptation lies in the combination of a strong organizational base to secure the party and charismatic leadership to transform its appeal. Thus, leaders like Tabaré Vazquez in Uruguay or Lula in Brazil were able to turn revolutionary parties into models of stable, moderate, and representative government. In short, Hunter’s sophisticated blending of rational choice, historical institutionalism, and contingent factors has produced the definitive account of the PT and a model for understanding party politics. It is highly recommended for scholars of comparative political parties.

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